

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USBERL 00873 01 OF 02 291404Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 (ISO) W
-----291428Z 025494 /41

R 281118Z MAR 77
FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4315
AMEMBASSY BONN
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 0873

STADIS//////////

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, GE, WB, UK, FR, US
SUBJECT: ALLIED RESPONSE TO GDR MEASURES IN BERLIN

REF: A) STATE 40753, D) BONN 5068
B) MOSCOW 3087 (NOTAL)
C) BERLIN 5556

1. SUMMARY: THE US HAS THUS FAR TAKEN THE LEAD IN COM-
BATTING THE EFFECTS OF THE GDR PACKAGE OF MEASURES WHICH
SEEMS TO EXPAND WITH EACH MONTH. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE
OUR ALLIES BROUGHT INTO SYNCHRONIZATION WITH US. WE
FEEL SUCH A NEED BECAUSE WE CANNOT BUT FEEL CONCERN AS
WE CONSIDER PARALLELS OF 1977 WITH GDR MEASURES PRIOR
TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WALL IN 1961, AS MORE AND
MORE SOVIETS REFER TO ALLIED PATROLS AS " RELICS" OF THE
PAST, AS ABRASIMOV THREATENS AGAINST THAT THE SOVIET
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REACTION AGAINST ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF THE QA IN WEST
BERLIN WILL NOT ALWAYS BE IN THE FORM OF WRITTEN PROTESTS,
AND AS THE EAST FINDS IT NECESSARY TO DISINTER AND REITERATE
ITS POSITION ON THE STATUS OF BERLIN THE PRSS AND ON
PUBLIC OCCASIONS. WE ARE NOT TRYING TO PLAY CASSADNRA AND
PREDICT DISASTER, BUT WE DO THINK IT IMPORTANT TO SAY AGAIN
THAT THERE ARE SIGNS OF FUTURE TROUBLE, WHICH COULD RESULT

FROM EITHER EASTERN DESIGN OR CUMULATIVE MISCALCATION. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE FOUR OF US MOST DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE DAY-TO-DAY CONSIDERATION OF BERLIN PROBLEMS GO BEYOND REACTING TO EACH INDIVIDUAL MEASURE AND ANALYZE THE OVERALL PICTURE WITH VIEW TO DECIDING PRUDENT AND CREDIBLE COUNTER-ACTIONS. WE NOT FROM REFTEL D BOISSEIU'S COMMENTS WHICH INDICATE THAT THE FRENCH IN THIER OWN WAY RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR CONCERTED ACTION. END SUMMARY.

2. WE APPRECIATE INVITATION TO COMMENT ON REF A.

3. SINCE OUR 456 OF FEB 11, THE FOLLOWING NEW DEVELOPMENTS HAVE OCCURRED: THE GDR IMPOSED A TEN-MARK STREET USAGE FEE ON WEST GERMAN AND WEST BERLIN TRAFFIC TO EAST BERLIN, AND RAISED FEES FOR TOUR BUSES. THE GDR HAS ALSO TURNED BACK MANY HUNDREDS OF WOULD-BE VISITORS TO THE GDR, INCLUDING PERSONS CLAIMING TO WANT TO VISIT THE LEIPZIG FAIR. HONECKER HAS DISMISSED THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE VERORDNUNGSBLATT AS A " PAPER-SAVING MEASURE". THE GDR-CONTROLLED REICHSBAHN CONTINUES TO SEEK WAYS TO FLOUT ALLIED AUTHORITY IN WEST BERLIN. SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV AGAIN RAISED THE " RELIC" OF ALLIED FLAG TOURS, ESPECIALLY U.S. FLAG TOURS, DURING HIS MARCH 11 LUNCH WITH WORMSER. DURING HIS MARCH 10 PRESS CONFERENCE, ABRASIMOV WAS REPORTED TO DENY THE EXISTENCE OF ANY ALLIED RIGHT TO SUCH PATROLS. THIS REPORT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY CLARIFIED (AND ONLY SLIGHTLY AMELIORATED) BY THE SOVIETS (REF C), WHO NOW SAY THAT ABRASIMOV, IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY ABOUT ALLIED RIGHTS IN THE EAST SECTOR OF BERLIN, CONFIDENTIAL

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MERELY RESPONDED THAT THERE IS NO EASTERN SECTOR. A MEMBER OF HIS STAFF, KHOTULEV, SUGGESTED TO A BBC CORRESPONDENT THAT IF THE ALLIES WOULD CEASE SENDING FLAG TOURS TO EAST BERLIN, THE SOVIETS WOULD STOP SENDING SUCH TOURS TO WEST BERLIN (PRESUMABLY, HOWEVER, CONTINUING TO SEND THEIR SOLDIERS BY VEHICLE TO BASC, SPANDAU PRISON, AND THE SOVIET WAR MEMORIAL).

4. WITH RESPECT TO WESTERN REACTION TO THE GDR MOVES OF THE PAST SIX MONTHS, WE CAN SUMMARIZE THE SITUATION AS FOLLOWS: AS REFTEL D DEMONSTRATES, THE FRENCH ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT GDR ACTIONS BUT CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT COUNTER-MEASURES IN BERLIN ARE NOT LIKELY TO RESULT IN WESTERN ADVANTAGE. RATHER, THEY WOULD LIKE MEASURES, LIKE THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE DE GUIRINGAUD TRIP, TO BE TAKEN AGAINST THE GDR ITSELF AND THEY HAVE ALREADY CONVEYED TO THE SOVIETS THE MESSAGE THAT EAST/WEST RELATIONS WILL SUFFER IF A CONTINUATION OF THE SALAMI TACTICS TAKES PLACE. AMB.

WORMSER WAS VERY TOUGHT INDEED IN THIS FINAL LUNCH
WITH ABRASIMOV. TO THE IMMENSE CHAGRIN OF OUR BRITISH
COLLEAGUES HERE, LONDON CONTINUES TO BE DOMINATED BY
MR. HIBBERT'S THINKING, WHICH NOBODY SEEMS TO UNDER-
STAND, ALTHOUGH ONE COLLEAGUE WHO CALLED HIBBERT A
"LITTLE ENGLANDER" MAY BE CLOSE TO THE MARK. AS
FOR THE WEST GERMANS, IT SEEMS FROM THE BERLIN
VANTAGE POINT THAT THEY ARE FAR FROM AGREEMENT ON
HOW TO DEAL WITH THE GDR ACTIONS IN BERLIN, MUCH
LESS ON THE LARGER ISSUE OF WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEIR
WORSENING RELATIONS WITH THE EAST GERMANS. IN
BERLIN, PRESS AND OTHER MEDIA TEND TO STRESS THE NEED FOR
COUNTER-MEASURES OR COUNTER-ACTION BY BOTH THE
ALLIES AND THE FRG, A VIEW CERTAINLY INFLUENCED
BY THE LOCAL ATMOSPHERE BUT PROBABLY WIDELY SUP-
PORTED BY CDU AND SOME SPD ELEMENTS IN THE FRG.
COUNTER-ACTION IS CERTAINLY ON THE MINDS OF LOCAL
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POLITICIANS. CDU LEADER LORENZ SUGGESTED TO US,
AND LATER TO BRITISH AND FRENCH, THAT ALLIES
MIGHT DEMONSTRATE THEIR RIGHTS IN BERLIN IN MORE
VISIBLE WAYS, FOR EXAMPLE BY HOLDING MILITARY BAND
CONCERTS IN EAST BERLIN. THE US, WE KNOW, HAS
DONE CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN FRANCE, THE UK, OR THE
FRG, THUS FAR, AS BEFITS ITS TRADITIONAL ROLE AS

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----291608Z 027336 /40

R 281118Z MAR 77
FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4316
AMEMBASSY BONN
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USBERLIN 0873

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PRIMUS INTER PARES WHEN IT COMES TO SHOULDERING BERLIN'S
POLITICAL BURDENS.

5. OUR OWN GUESS, AND IT CAN BE NO MORE THAN THAT,
IS THAT WE WILL SEE MORE OF THE SAME PERHAPS AFTER A
PAUSE WHILE THE GDR CONSOLIDATES ITS RECENT GAINS.
ESTABLISHMENT OF FULL SOVEREIGNTY OVER ITS STATED
TERRITORY IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE GDR. WE
DOUBT THAT THERE IS ANYTHING THE WEST CAN OFFER THE
GDR, NOW THAT FORMAL DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION HAS BEEN
GIVEN, THAT WOULD BE AS IMPORTANT TO THE SED LEADER-
SHIP AS MEASURES ENHANCING GDR STATEHOOD. THEREFORE,
WE BELIEVE ONLY THE SOVIETS ARE IN A POSITION TO
DETER THE GDR FROM UNDERTAKING ACTIONS WHICH WOULD
FURTHER UNDERMINE THE STATUS OF BERLIN. THE REAL
PROBLEM IS TO PERSUADE THE SOVIETS THAT PERMITTING
THE GDR TO CONTINUE ITS ACTIONS AGAINST THE STATUS
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OF BERLIN CARRIES AN UNDESIRABLY HIGH ELEMENT OF
RISK FOR THEM, OR IN EMBASSY MOSCOW'S WORDS, WARN
THE SOVIETS IN ADVANCE OF THEIR REACHING OUR
RUBICON.

6. IN REF A, PARA 3, THE DEPARTMENT SUGGESTED THAT
THE SOVIETS MAY AUTHORIZE THE GDR TO TAKE STEPS
AGAINST THE STATUS OF BERLIN WHENEVER THE WEST
DID NOT SEEM IN THE MOOD FOR A FIGHT. THE GDR HAS
BEEN TESTING WESTERN REACTIONS FOR SOME MONTHS NOW
AND COULD REASONABLY BE EXPECTED TO HAVE CONCLUDED
THAT WE ARE NOT GOING TO REACT STRONGLY. WE FEAR
THIS MAY BE THE CASE CONSIDERING THE GROWING NUMBER
OF STATUS-RELATED MOVES WE HAVE SEEN OF LATE. WE
DO NOT KNOW BASIS FOR THE DEPT. VIEW THAT THE
SOVIETS ARE WELL AWARE OF HOW FAR THEY CAN GO IN
BERLIN WITHOUT RISKING A MAJOR CONFRONTATION.
WE CONFESS TO BEING UNEASY OVER THE REPEATED CHAL-
LENGING OF ALLIED FLAG TOURS WE HAVE HEARD OF LATE, AND THE
RENEWED CLAIMS, BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, BY ABRASMOV AND THE
SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT THERE IS NO EAST
BERLIN, AND THAT THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENTS

ESTABLISHING OUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES HERE
WERE ABROGATED TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO.

7. WE AGREE WITH THE DEPT. AND MOSCOW THAT THE
SOVIETS AND GDR HAVE THE ADVANTAGES LOCALLY. OUR
LONG SUIT REMAINS THE OVERALL STRENGTH OF THE US,
WHETHER EXPRESSED IN THE NUCLEAR SHIELD CONCEPT
OF EARLIER CRISES, OR ITS PRESENT-DAY VARIANT,
OUR ABILITY TO AFFECT EAST/WEST DEVELOPMENTS OF
INTEREST TO THE SOVIETS. WE RECOGNIZE,
THAT ALLIED CAPITALS APPEAR TO BE AGREED THAT
BERLIN IS THE WRONG TERRAIN ON WHICH TO DO
BATTLE, AND WE UNDERSTAND THE NEED FOR A PERIOD OF
WAITING IN ORDER TO SEE WHETHER US HIGH-LEVEL
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CONVERSATIONS AND THE RECENT MESSAGE CONVEYED BY
AMB. WORMSER (PRESUMABLY WITH FRENCH GOVERNMENT
APPROVAL) ACHIEVE THE DESIRED RESULT OF CALM IN
BERLIN. BUT WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO USE THIS WAITING
PERIOD TO PLAN FOR THE EVENTUALITY THAT THERE WILL
BE MORE ATTEMPTS TO SLICE THE SALAMI -- PERHAPS IN
EVEN THICKER SLICES. WE RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT
THE US REPRESENTATIVE IN THE BONN GROUP BE INSTRUCTED
TO TAKE THE LEAD IN INITIATING A DISCUSSION ON
THIS SUBJECT, TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE DEVELOPMENT
OF A CONTINGENCY ACTION PROGRAM TO BE USED IN THE
EVENT OF FURTHER DIFFICULTIES. (AS A STARTING POINT,
BONN GROUP COULD DEFINE OUR "RUBICON".) THE BONN
GROUP IN SOME OF ITS EARLY YEARS PERFORMED EXACTLY
THAT FUNCTION, AND REMAINS, IN OUR VIEW, THE
BEST FORUM FOR ACHIEVING A UNIFIED WESTERN VIEW ON
THE PROBLEM AND AN ASSESSMENT OF WHAT CONTRIBUTION
EACH COUNTRY CAN MAKE TO ITS SOLUTION. WE BELIEVE
SUCH A DISCUSSION COULD HELP TO INFLUENCE BRITISH
THINKING AND TO NUDGE THE FRG TOWARD CONSIDERATION
OF USING ITS MAJOR LEVER, ECONOMIC RELATIONS,
TO A GREATER DEGREE THAN IT HAS HITHERTO BEEN
WILLING TO DO. WE THINK, IN SHORT, THAT THE BONN
GROUP COULD MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ACTION PROGRAM FOR THE PRESERVATION
OF THE STATUS OF BERLIN.

8. IN PARTICULAR, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT CREDIBLE
CONSEQUENTIAL STEPS ON OUR SIDE ARE NEEDED TO PERSUADE
THE OTHER SIDE OF OUR SERIOUSNESS. AFTER ALL, THE EAST
MUST REALIZE THAT THEIR HUNDREDS OF ORAL DECLARATIONS,
PRESS STATEMENTS AND THE REST VERY RARELY HAVE DETERRED
THE WEST FROM DOING WHAT IT REGARDS AS NECESSARY. (WE
WILL FLY TO ZURICH ON APRIL 1 FOR EXAMPLE). ALL OF THE MORE

REASON FOR THE EAST TO REGARD A VERBAL WESTERN REACTION AS
PRO FORMA IN NATURE, SAVE ON THOSE OCCASIONS WHEN IT IS
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MADE AT AN UNUSUALLY HIGH LEVEL. IN THAT CONNECTION, WE
WERE GLAD LEARN OF THE DEMARCHES CIITED IN PARA 10 OF
REF A, AND TO HEAR THAT SECRETURY VANCE INTENDS TO RAISE
BERLIN QUESTION IN MOSCOW. PERHAPS IT WILL BE POSSIBLE
BUILD ON THESE AS MAY BE REQUIRED TO CONVINCE SOVIETS/GDR
THAT CONTINUATION RECENT PRESSURE TACTICS ON BERLIN, IN
SAME WAY AS WOULD UNCONTROLLED ARMS RACE, WILL BRING ABOUT
CONSEQUENCES THAT WILL LEAVE THEM WORSE OFF THAN THEY ARE
NOW. IN OUR VIEW THAT SHOULD BE ALLIED GOAL FOR
BERLIN.
GEORGE

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Message Attributes

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